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# International Stage

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# University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



## International Stage

**06.29.2010 | Business, Students**

The winning company in the 2009-2010 University of Dayton Business Plan Competition has advanced to the international stage to see how its idea stacks up against ideas from teams at schools like Cambridge, Harvard, MIT and Northwestern.

Commuter Advertising, which creates audio advertising for public transit vehicles keyed to specific locations through GPS technology and shares ad revenue with transit systems, is one of the final 16 companies out of 90 entrants in the \$250,000 Global Business Plan Competition sponsored by global venture capital firm Draper Fisher Jurvetson (DFJ) and Cisco Systems.

The 16 finalists will make their final presentations Tuesday, June 29. The winner will be announced later that evening.

"These 16 dynamic teams from around the world embody the entrepreneurial spirit of our global business plan competition," said Hilton Romanski, vice president of corporate development at Cisco. "They are taking on interesting challenges and tackling tough issues with thoughtful and creative solutions, and we look forward to meeting them...and learning more about their business plans next week."

Dayton-based Commuter Advertising, founded by Russell Gottesman and Katie Hill, is the only company from the Ohio-Pennsylvania region to advance to the finals.

Draper Fisher Jurvetson invited Commuter Advertising to the invitation-only competition in part because of the University of Dayton's relationship with the firm's regional affiliate, Draper Triangle Ventures.

"Commuter Advertising was one of thousands of new ventures from 17 countries screened for possible inclusion. The finalists, most of whom have won university business plan competitions, represent some of the best universities in the world. We're incredibly proud of Commuter Advertising," said Dean McFarlin, chair of the University of Dayton's department of management and marketing, the home of the Business Plan Competition. "We thought Commuter Advertising would be a terrific entry for the competition and didn't hesitate to promote it when Draper Triangle Ventures asked us for nominations."

Regardless of the outcome, McFarlin said Commuter Advertising is in good shape by being a finalist. Draper Fisher Jurvetson will offer some form of assistance to the finalists and offer access to investment capital from its 18-member worldwide network.

Draper Fisher Jurvetson backs entrepreneurs who set out to change the world. DFJ and the network manage more than \$6 billion and have made more than 600 investments on four continents. DFJ has invested in Hotmail, Skype and TicketsNow, among others.

Commuter Advertising took home the \$20,000 top prize in the University of Dayton Business Plan Competition in March and donated \$1,000 back to support development of the University's entrepreneurship program.

Commuter Advertising also has received \$300,000 in support from the Dayton Development Coalition.

McFarlin said there is a rapidly growing interest in the University's business plan competition, which this year attracted 82 entries and more than 170 participants. Total prize money this year grew to \$50,000.

The University of Dayton is nationally recognized for its hands-on approach to developing student entrepreneurs. In 2009, The Princeton Review and Entrepreneur magazine ranked the entrepreneurship program in the top 10 in the nation for the fourth straight year.

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